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| Kildimo National School Relationships & Sexuality Education (RSE) Policy |

This policy, in accordance with the provisions of the Children First Act (2015), Education Act (1998), Education (Welfare) Act (2000), details the aims and the content of the agreed programme for the provision and the delivery of ‘*Relationships & Sexuality Education (RSE)* in Kildimo National School. We trust that by detailing these procedures, it will assist all parties in relation to the content of this important subject area.

**School Ethos:**

Kildimo National School, as an inclusive primary school, under the Patronage of the Catholic Bishop of Limerick, is committed to the education and development of each pupil.

We welcome pupils of all denominations and from every culture and social background.

We strive to foster each child's physical, emotional, social, intellectual and spiritual development. We recognise that every child has a right to equal opportunity in education and have special concern for children in difficult circumstances and with special needs.

As a staff, we relate with each other in a respectful, caring way, thus providing good example to our pupils. In valuing the importance of partnership between staff, parents, management and community, we strive to be open and welcoming. Our school plays an active part in developing a sense of community.

Kildimo National School strives to maintain a positive climate for the entire school community. In this space the child is encouraged to reach his/her full potential on a holistic level.

Definition of RSE

RSE aims to help children learn, at home and in school, about their own development and about their friendships and relationships with others. This work is based on developing a good self-image, promoting respect for themselves and others and providing them with appropriate information. RSE also aims to provide opportunities for children and young people to learn about relationships and sexuality in ways that help them think and act in a moral, caring and responsible way.

**Relationship of RSE to SPHE:**

Social, Personal and Health Education (SPHE) provides opportunities for pupils to learn basic personal and social skills which foster integrity, self-confidence and self- esteem while nurturing sensitivity to the feelings and rights of others.

**Current Provision:**

* SPHE curriculum is followed as per DES recommendations.
* Use of RSE Manuals, Busy Bodies online resources and booklets.
* Religious Education is taught through the Grow in Love programme.
* Currently, teachers cover all aspects of RSE with their classes on an annual basis.
* The Stay Safe programme is taught in its entirety every second year.
* ‘Tom’s Flower Power’ booklet is sent home to Parents.

**Aims of our RSE programme:**

* To help young people develop healthy friendships and relationships.
* To foster an understanding of and healthy attitude to, human sexuality and relationships in a moral, spiritual and social framework.
* To promote knowledge of and respect for human love, sexual intercourse and reproduction.
* To understand the physical changes taking place with the onset of puberty.
* To promote a sense of wonder and awe at the process of birth and new life.
* To enable the child to feel comfortable with his/her sexuality and that of others.

**Guidelines for the Management and Organisation of RSE in our School**

**[1] Organisational Matters**

* Guidelines from the Department of Education and Skills are followed.
* RSE lessons are delivered at each class level to boys and girls together, with the exception of one “question and answer” session for 6th class pupils, which is held separately for boys and girls to give them the opportunity to ask questions in an environment in which they may feel more comfortable.

**Parents**

* Parents have the responsibility to become involved, to inform themselves of the programme content, to prepare children for the information they will acquire around the sensitive areas and to discuss areas covered in school in RSE/ SPHE with their children.
* If a parent has a particular concern/ issue in relation to the teachings of the RSE programme, they are encouraged to discuss same with the teacher.
* As always, parents are requested to inform teachers of special family situations. These will be dealt with in confidence

**[2] Curriculum Matters:**

* The Curriculum by NCCA is followed and taught in Infants to 6th class. All resources used are in keeping with the ethos of the school and the policy. Each class teacher teaches the content for his/her class level.
* Children are encouraged to discuss material being covered in class with their parents or guardians. Where relevant, handouts, worksheets etc. will be provided to facilitate this; eg. Home-School Links pages of the RSE manuals.
* In a class situation, children are encouraged to recognise that certain information is for them only i.e. that it is inappropriate for them to discuss information received about puberty, intercourse and birth with younger siblings, friends from outside school etc. It is explained that other children will be given this information by their own parents and teachers when it is developmentally appropriate for them to receive it. However, the school cannot take any responsibility for what is discussed outside of the school or on the yard.
* A respect for personal privacy and information is emphasised. Teachers neither give nor request personal information. Children are taught to recognise that certain personal disclosures are inappropriate within a group setting.

**Topics covered up to 2nd class include:**

* Keeping Safe
* Bodily changes during growth and birth
* Making age appropriate choices
* Appreciating family life
* Recognising and expressing feelings
* Self-care, hygiene, diet, exercise and sleep
* Expressing opinions and listening to others
* *Naming the parts of the male/female body using appropriate anatomical terms (Junior/ Senior Infants) \*See Appendix 1 for details*
* *Naming the parts of the male/female body using appropriate anatomical terms and identify some of their functions (1st/ 2nd ) \*See Appendix 1 for details*
* *The 5 topics of the Stay Safe programme*

**Topics covered up to sixth class include:**

* Bodily changes
* Healthy eating, personal hygiene, exercise
* Keeping Safe
* Expressing feelings
* Family relationships- Same Love/ Different Families (INTO Resource)
* Making healthy and responsible decisions
* Forming friendships
* The 5 topics of the Stay Safe programme
* *Discuss the stages and sequence of development of the human baby in the womb (Fourth class)*
* *Changes that occur in boys and girls with the onset of puberty (Fourth class)*
* *Reproductive system of male/female adults (Fifth & Sixth Class) \*See Appendix 1 for details*
* *Understanding sexual intercourse, conception and birth within the context of a loving, committed relationship. (Sixth Class) \*See Appendix 1 for details*

**[3] Dealing with Questions:**

* A question box may be used throughout lessons where appropriate
* Teachers use specific language and teach concepts for each class level in line with the SPHE curriculum and school ethos. *\*See Appendix 1 for details*
* Children’s questions are dealt with, taking into account the following criteria when relevant

-By being aware of circumstances in which the question has arisen

-By clarifying what information is required

-By deciding, if the issue is relevant, who is it relevant to

-By giving a developmentally or age- appropriate answer

-By deferring the question as one which will be answered in the next lesson, one which should be answered at home or one which will be answered more fully in the future

**[4] Students with SEN:**

* Taking into account student’s cognitive, social and emotional development and their class level (4th, 5th & 6th Class), instruction on the sensitive aspects of RSE, is based on individual needs and decided together by parents, mainstream teachers and support teachers during the child’s IEP meeting. The special education team assists the mainstream teacher with the facilitation of appropriate and agreed RSE provision for the child with SEN.

**[5] Assessment:**

* Assessment of the programme takes the form of observation by and feedback from parents, teachers and pupils.

**Provision of Ongoing Support:**

* Parents are welcome to view the curriculum and resource materials if they so wish.
* Parents have the primary responsibility for educating their children in sexual matters. The school RSE programme acts as a support only to parents, and parents retain the right to withdraw their children from classes. Should a parent decide to withdraw his/her child from RSE lessons in school, s/he will be asked to put this in writing with reasons for doing so. They will also be asked to include a sentence stipulating that they will take full responsibility to teach RSE to their child instead.

**Links to other Policy Areas:**

1. Wellbeing Policy Statement and Framework for Practice: ( DES Circular 0042/2018)

2. Anti- Bullying Procedures: (DES Circular 0045/2013)

3. Child Protection Procedures: (DES Circular 0018/2017)

4. Webwise online safety programme.

**Child Protection:**

The school follows the DES child protection guidelines and has a child protection policy with the Principal as Designated Liaison Person. In cases of disclosure, the DLP will follow the procedures as set out in Children First. Guidelines and Procedures 2017

**Review:**

* This policy will be reviewed after the initial twelve month period has passed and every two years thereafter. Parents and staff will be informed of any amendments.

**Signature:** \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Chairperson BOM Kildimo NS

**Date:** \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Appendix 1

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| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Lesson Content – Sensitive Issues | | | | | |
| Class | Lesson | Strand Unit | Language | Date | Home/School |
| **J.I.**  **S.I.** | **Theme 6**  Caring for new life p.137  **Theme 7**  My Body p.147 | Growing and changing  Taking care of my body | Penis/ Vulva  Naming parts of male and female body using appropriate anatomical terms | Term 2 | S.I. RSE Manual p. 145  S.I. RSE Manual p. 156 |
| **1st**  **2nd** | **Theme 6**  The wonder of new life p.59/p.151  **Theme 7**  How my body works p67  When my body needs special care p.161  **Theme 8**  Growing means changing p. 77/p.171 | Growing and changing  Taking care of my body | As above: introduce womb, vagina, breast, breast feeding, urethra.  Naming as above and identify some of the functions. | Term 2 | RSE Manual p. 65, 160, 169 |
| **3rd**  **4th** | **Theme 6**  Preparing for new life p.69  **Theme 6 from 4th class**  The wonder of new life p.169  **Theme 8**  As I grow I change p.93  **Theme 8**  Growing and changing p.195 | Growing and changing | Discuss the stages and sequence of development of human baby in the womb. Umbilical cord. Any questions as to how the baby got there cannot be answered by the teacher. | Term 2 | RSE Manual p. 181 |
| **5th**  **6th** | **Theme 6**  My body grows and changes p.81  **Theme 7**  The wonder of new life p.93  **Theme 8**  Caring for new life p.103  **Theme 2**  Different kinds of love p.141 | Growing and changing  Taking care of my body | Changes that occur in boys and girls at the onset of puberty.  Reproductive system of male/female adults.  Understand sexual intercourse, conception and birth within context of a loving, committed relationship. | Term 2 | RSE Manual p. 92,101,112,149  Busy Body online resources. |